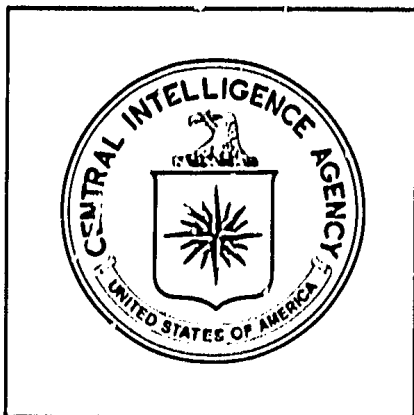


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STAFF NOTES:

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Soviet Position on Spanish
Sahara Antagonizes Rabat

The pro-Algerian position Moscow has recently adopted toward the Spanish Sahara dispute has led to a deterioration in Soviet-Moroccan relations.

In the UN, the Soviets have sided with Algeria's view that the Spanish Sahara question should be resolved by granting self-determination to the colony's inhabitants. Soviet UN representative Malik--with an obvious eye on King Hassan's threatened mass march into the territory--has urged "restraint and moderation" on the concerned parties. *Pravda* also weighed in on behalf of Algiers earlier this week in its first commentary on the Saharan situation. The brief article pointed out that the UN General Assembly has twice voted for the right of self-determination for the territory's people and voiced Moscow's opposition to any effort to deny them this right.

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To show displeasure over the Soviet position, King Hassan has canceled the visit of a Soviet delegation that was to put the final touches on a major Soviet-Moroccan phosphates agreement, according to a Moroccan Foreign Ministry official.

Moscow's tilt toward Algeria has probably not come easily. The Soviets have had their problems with Algeria's espousal of Third World causes, and they have made some effort over the last year to

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strengthen ties with Morocco. They are particularly interested in the development and purchase of Moroccan phosphates, which have become an important supplement to the USSR's sagging domestic production and may take on more importance if this year's crop failure leads to even further Soviet emphasis on fertilizers.

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